Amendment to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 18, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--As generally illustrated in FIG. 1, the present invention provides <u>an Accelerated Process Improvement Framework (APIF).</u> a ~~CMM in a BOX~~ method 10 for easing and speeding an organization's transformation toward higher levels of the above-described CMM hierarchy. The <u>APIF</u> ~~CMM in a BOX~~ method 10 generally comprises the steps of getting started 20, organization management 100, program management 400, project management 500, and delivery management 600. As suggested in FIG. 1, the <u>APIF</u> ~~CMM in a BOX~~ method 10 performs as a cycle in which actions performed during the organization management 100 help control the current steps of program management 400, project management 500, and delivery management 600. Subsequently, the actions performed during program management 400, project management 500, and delivery management 600 adjust the step of organization management 100. Each of these steps of <u>the</u> <u>APIF</u> ~~CMM in a Box~~ method 10 is described in greater detail below.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 30, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--In these discussions, it should be appreciated that the various steps of the <u>APIF</u> ~~CMM in a Box~~ method 10 preferably include the creation or updating of various documentation (or monuments) that detail and verify the execution of tasks performed by the organization. These documents may be used to demonstrate compliance with the higher levels of the CMM or CMMI. Some of these documents are listed directly with the associated steps, but a complete listing is beyond the scope of the present application. A short listing and summary of some of the various documents that may be created or updated during the steps of the <u>APIF</u> ~~CMM in a Box~~ method 10 is attached hereto as Appendix A.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 11, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--The <u>APIF</u> ~~CMM in a BOX~~ method 10 begins with getting started step 20. In step 20, the organization prepares to initiate the other steps in the <u>APIF</u> ~~CMM in a BOX~~ method 10. In particular, the organization may review the requirements of the various management steps 100, ~~300,~~ 400, <u>500,</u> and 600. Similarly, the organization may review the CMM or CMMI and their general requirements in order to better understand the goals to be accomplished during the various steps of the <u>APIF</u> ~~CMM in a Box~~ method 10.--

Please also replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 20, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--One possible process for planning the SEPG project execution, step 210, is generally depicted in FIG. 2B. In an initial aspect of the planning a SEPG project execution, step 210, the organization tailors the APIF ~~CMM in a Box~~ method 10 as needed. Specifically in step 212, the organization determines whether to waive or skip steps in the APIF ~~CMM in a Box~~ method 10 as required by organization or the particular project. For instance, the organization skip tasks that are inapplicable to a project and therefore unneeded to either achieving higher levels of maturity in the CMM or to develop more mature products.--

Please also replace the paragraph beginning at page 32, line 14, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Returning to FIG. 3A, the next process in the personnel stage 300 is to design and deploy training, step 330. In step ~~33~~ 330, the training needs of the organization are analyzed and a Training Plan is created, training is designed, developed and deliverer and post implementation support is provided. The organization performs step 330 to plan activities related to training employees. The design and deployment of training during step 330 is illustrated in greater detail in FIG. 3D. As illustrated in FIG. 3D, the first task in step 330 is to conduct a training needs analysis, step 331, during which the organization identifies, by name, the participants to be trained, along with the courses and modules on which these participants will be trained. In step 331, target audiences and participants are identified, and training courses and modules are planned. The training needs analysis in step 331 may be conducted in two phases. During the first phase, the organization gathers the high-level training needs for the organization. Similarly, the second phase consists of gathering the detailed training needs for the organization.--

Please also replace the paragraph beginning at page 33, line 24, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Throughout steps 200 and 300, as well as other steps in the APIF method ~~CMM in a Box Method~~ 10, the organization may need to commit to one or more actions (not illustrated) as required to achieve higher maturity levels in the CMM or the CMMI. Commit points are major decisions regarding reporting the progress of present work and obtaining authorization to continue. Commit points define the boundaries of each stage around key decisions related to content, context and course of action. For instance, a commit point may be implemented prior to the executing and design of an organization infrastructure in step 320, to require that the design of the new organization structure must be approved before further implementation can proceed.

Please also replace the paragraph beginning at page 34, line 5, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Returning to FIG. 1, a second primary component of the APIF ~~CMM in a Box~~ method 10 of the present invention is program management step 400. Program management step 400 generally concerns activities directly related to the creation and refinement of a program for implementing the APIF ~~CMM in a Box~~ method 10. Specifically, program management 400 focuses on the continuous oversight needed to support the delivery of a business solution through multiple projects and releases. Appropriate disciplines, techniques, and tools are used in step 400 to plan and organize the work, and to manage the incremental delivery of the new business solution. As illustrated in FIG. 4A, the program management stage 400 generally comprises the steps of justifying the program (step 410); planning the program execution (step 420); organizing program resources (step 430); controlling program work (step 440); and completing the program (step 450). These individual steps are now described in greater detail.

Please also replace the paragraph beginning at page 41, line 17, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Returning to FIG. 1, the APIF ~~CMM in a Box~~ method 10 generally calls for the organizations to concurrently perform project management 500 with the program management 400. The project management 500 is generally depicted in FIGS. 5A-5O. Project management 500 generally concerns activities and structures directly related to the creation and refinement of a project or product for sale. Project management 500 controls the delivery of the specific components from which a business solution is derived through the balanced management of Scope, Quality, Effort, Risk and Timeline (SQERT). Project management 500 focuses on making critical decisions and managing risk that will ensure the delivery of the promised scope, on time and within budget at the agreed-upon levels of quality. When a program management function exists, project management works closely

with program management to execute the SQERT activities in relation to the delivery of multiple projects under one overall program. As illustrated in FIG. 5A, project management 500 generally includes planning of project execution (step 510); organization of project resources (step 520); control project work (step 530); completion of the project (step 540); an SQA review execution (step 550); and supplier agreement management (step 560).

Please also replace the paragraph beginning at page 63, line 24, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Returning to FIG. 1, the next step of the APIF ~~CMM in a Box~~ method 10 of the present invention is to implement delivery management 600. Delivery management 600 relates to the activities undertaken to develop a system software application for eventual delivery to clients. The Delivery management step 600 translates the required business outcomes into a business solution. A business solution is the combination of business process, a technology solution and organizational changes that collectively create value by improving business performance. The Delivery Management Module defines a multi-functional approach for taking each business solution from analysis to deployment. As depicted in FIG. 6A, the delivery management 600 encompasses four stages of work: analysis, step 700; design, step 800; building and testing, step 900; and deployment, step 1000. One of the delivery programs should be mobilized for each business solution to be delivered.

Please also replace the paragraph beginning at page 72, line 1, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Returning FIG. 8A, a preferred embodiment of the delivery management stage also includes a peer review, step 840, of the other steps 810-830 undertaken during the process of designing the technology infrastructure, step 800. In the peer review, the organization verifies the accuracy and completeness of a deliverable product, whether it is a document or code, for any step in the delivery stage 600. It should be appreciated that, while displayed at this point in the APIF ~~CMM in a Box~~ method 10, a peer review 240 may be implemented at any time as necessary to satisfy the requirements of the CMM or CMMI as well as other overriding business concerns.

Please also replace the paragraph beginning at page 92, line 21, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Those skilled in the art of process engineering will recognize that various embodiments of the APIF ~~CMM in a Box~~ method 10 described above may be implemented in various ways. For instance, the organization may use a set of written templates directing the implementation of the tasks in the APIF ~~CMM in a Box~~ method 10.--

Please also replace the paragraph beginning at page 92, line 25, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--In one implementation, the present invention may be implemented as a computer application that prompts an organization for various inputs regarding its operation and structure. Using these inputs, the application then creates a series of task lists to implement the APIF CMM in a Box method 10 of the present invention. The application may further create a record of task lists, so that the organization may easily document its actions as required in the CMM and CMMI. Alternatively, the program may provide templates through which the organization may document its activities.--

Please also replace the paragraph beginning at page 93, line 3, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--In particular, those skilled in the art will recognize that various embodiments of the APIF CMM in a Box method 10 described above may be implemented using a combination of both electronic hardware and software. Referring to Fig. 11A, an APIF a CMM implementation system 1100 receives user input 1130 and produces a business organization plan 1140 based on the user input 1130. The system 1100 may be, for example, a personal computer (PC), a server, or any other computer device used for such purposes. The APIF system 1100 may be coupled to a database 1120 containing information on the organization and its suppliers. In this embodiment, the system 1100 has an organization management module 1110, a program management module 1112, a project management module 1114 and a delivery management module 1116 for implementing organization management 100, program management 400, project management 500, and delivery management 600.--

Please also replace the paragraph beginning at page 93, line 15, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--If the computer device 1100 is, for example, a network server, in electronic communication with an electronic network, then users 1160 may be able to use the APIF CMM system 1100 remotely. Referring to Fig. 11B showing the computer device of Fig. 11A in electronic communication with a network 1150. The network 1150, may be, for example, the Internet, an intranet, an extranet, a Value Added Network ("VAN"), Virtual Product Network (VPN) and the like. Users 1160 may transmit user input data 1120 to the APIF CMM system 1100 via the electronic network 1150 then obtain a business organization plan 1140 based on the input data 1130.--

Please also replace the paragraph beginning at page 93, line 23, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--In another embodiment, the APIF ~~CMM~~ system 1100 illustrated in FIGS. 11A-B, may be a software application designed to operate over various hardware and computer systems, as known in the art.--

Please also replace the paragraph beginning at page 93, line 28, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--In tests, the APIF ~~The CMM in a Box~~ method 10 of the present invention has been empirically shown to allow organizations to achieve higher levels of CMM hierarchy much more rapidly. On average, an organization or a project within an organization takes about three years to achieve compliance with level 3 of the CMM. In contrast, several test projects implementing the APIF ~~CMM in a Box~~ method 10 of the present invention have reached level 3 of the CMM in an average of nine months. These results suggest the utility and benefit of the present invention in assisting organizations to achieve higher levels of CMM maturity.--

Furthermore, please replace the Abstract at page 101, line 1, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- The present invention relates to a method and related system for assisting and expediting an organization's ~~transformation toward higher levels of the Capability Maturity Model (CMM). In particular, the present invention provides a method for producing~~ development of a more mature product. A preferred embodiment of the method comprises the managing of an organization developing the product, whereby the organizational management comprises managing personnel of the organization and implementing a product improvement process. The method may further comprise managing a project for developing the product and managing the delivery of the product. Furthermore, actions undertaken during the organizational management affects implementation of the project and delivery managements, and the actions undertaken during the project and delivery managements likewise affect implementation of the organizational management. ~~In another embodiment,~~ [T]his method may be implemented using a combination of both electronic hardware and software and may be implemented locally or over a network such as an intranet or the Internet..--